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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: DENMARK ON NUCLEAR SUPPLIERS GROUP DRAFT EXCEPTION
TEXT FOR INDIA

REF: SECSTATE 85948

Classified By: Ambassador James P. Cain, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) Summary. MFA Permanent Under Secretary Michael Zilmer-Johns told Ambassador Cain August 12 that Denmark's "end goal is to support and participate in a positive decision in the Nuclear Suppliers Group." However, Denmark must first navigate what could be tricky domestic cross-currents that combine a traditional skepticism of nuclear power with strong anti-proliferation instincts. Zilmer-Johns also cautioned that the Danes may have a timing problem, since the Danes will only first be able to seek parliamentary approval of any deal in early September. End Summary.

12. (C) Ambassador Cain called on Danish MFA Permanent Under Secretary Michael Zilmer-Johns August 12 to encourage Denmark's support of ref draft exception text for India in the Nuclear Suppliers Group. The Ambassador reminded Zilmer-Johns that President Bush had discussed the U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Cooperation Initiative with Danish Prime Minister Rasmussen during PM Rasmussen's visit to Crawford in June. Gaining international agreement and support for the Initiative was vital to keeping India on a positive path of civilian nuclear cooperation and would strengthen international non-proliferation efforts, Ambassador Cain explained. The IAEA Board of Governors had also signaled its support for the Initiative in recently approving India's safeguards agreement with the IAEA. The U.S. was therefore hoping for Denmark's help in obtaining strong, non-conditional support for the draft exception text to be discussed at the upcoming Nuclear Suppliers Group meeting in Vienna August 21-22.

13. (C) Zilmer-Johns recalled the Crawford discussions and added that PM Rasmussen had also discussed the U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Cooperation Initiative directly with the Indian Prime Minister during a visit to New Delhi late last year. Denmark was "acutely aware" of the Initiative's importance. Zilmer-Johns continued that the proposed agreement, however, was not without controversy among some domestic Danish audiences. Denmark has traditionally taken a very tough line on compliance with international non-proliferation regimes, and Zilmer-Johns noted that Denmark still felt India needed to take additional steps to demonstrate that the proposed Initiative would not undermine existing regimes. Zilmer-Johns stressed, however, that Denmark saw the "long-term strategic perspective" of obtaining India's cooperation on civilian nuclear energy, and the U.S.-India Initiative was a "logical" vehicle for doing so.

14. (C) Zilmer-Johns continued that Denmark's decision making would also be complicated by a strong domestic anti-nuclear energy lobby. The Danish Government would thus have to work hard for approval of any Danish endorsement of a NSG exception text for India that would pave the way for a U.S.-India deal. Zilmer-Johns said Danish Foreign Minister Per Stig Moeller had already briefed the Danish Parliament's

Foreign Policy Committee on the broad outlines of the U.S.-India deal. The Danish Government needs only a majority vote in parliament to support an agreement, though the government would prefer to have the largest opposition party, the Social Democrats, also on board. Moeller plans to return to the Foreign Policy Committee after the August 21-22 NSG meeting, but his first opportunity to do so will be only on September 4, which could conflict with the Danes reaching a timely decision, Zilmer-Johns cautioned. Still, Denmark "will not be a spoiler," Zilmer-Johns assured the Ambassador.

15. (C) Zilmer-Johns concluded by telling Ambassador Cain he was "relatively optimistic" that Denmark would be helpful, but that the Danish Government first "has work to do at home." Ambassador Cain stressed that the USG was ready to offer any assistance it could in helping the Danish Government make its case to domestic audiences. Zilmer-Johns said that the USG could "count on Denmark to be constructive" and that Copenhagen's "end goal is to support and participate in positive decision in the NSG."

CAIN